URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF NORTHAM

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Windmill Lane, Northam, Nr. Bideford.
Telephone Bideford 3999.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the year

1967

—o—

E. WILLIAMS,
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health

C. J. UTTING,
M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.,
Public Health Inspector.

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REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

To : The Chairman and Councillors of the Urban District Council of Northam.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to present the Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Administration of the District for the year ending 31st December, 1967.

Public Health Committee for the year 1967/68.

Chairman : A. C. Saunders.

Councillors :	Mrs. I. B. Bignell	C. T. Hornabrook
	Mrs. C. M. Congdon	J. O. Morrish
	S. G. Eastman	G. Northcott
	Mrs. E. M. Hilder, J.P.	J. Reary
	H. E. Hopkins	J. Smith

Staff

The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of :—

Part-time Officers

Dr. E. Williams, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health.

Miss M. Gale — Clerk/Typist.

Full-time Officer

C. J. Utting, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.
Public Health Inspector.

General Statistics of the District.

Area in acres	4,134
Population (Registrar General's Mid-Year Estimate)	7,450
Population at 1961 Census	6,572
Rateable Value (as at 1.4.67)	£252,612
Product of a Penny Rate for Year 1967/68	£1,000
General Rate per £ for year 1967/68	11s. 1d.
Number of Inhabited Houses (as at 31.4.67)	3,029
Number of Council Houses	315
Density of Persons per house	2.46

Vital Statistics

Live Births	
Number	91
Rate per 1,000 population	12.2
Rate per 1,000 population adjusted by Comparability Factor	17.8
Illegitimate Live Births per cent of total Live births	6.6
Still Births	
Number	2
Rate per 1,000 Total Live and Still Births	22
Total Live and Still Births	93
Infant Deaths (death under 1 year)	2
Infant Mortality Rates	
Total Infant Deaths per 1,000 Total Live Births	22
Legitimate Infant Deaths per 1,000 Total Live Births	23.5
Illegitimate Infant Deaths per 1,000 Total Live Births	Nil
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (Deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 Total Live Births)	21.9
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (Deaths under 1 week per 1,000 Total Live Births)	21.9
Perinatal Mortality Rate (Stillbirths and Deaths)	43
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)	
Number of Deaths	Nil
Rate per 1,000 Total Live and Still Births	Nil
Deaths	111
Death Rate per 1,000 population	14.9
Death Rate per 1,000 population adjusted by Comparability Factor	8.9
Births : Area Comparability Factor	1.46
Deaths : Area Comparability Factor	0.6

Births

During the year there were 91 births which was 2 more than occurred in 1966.

Live Births

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	48	37	85
Illegitimate	1	5	6
			91

Still Births

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	0	2	2
Illegitimate	0	0	0
			2

Deaths

The total number of deaths of Urban District residents during the year was 111 as compared with 124 during 1966.

Males	Females	Total
51	60	111

Death Rate : per 1,000 population (adjusted) 14.9
Death Rate : England and Wales (adjusted) 8.9

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age :—

	Males		Females	
	Legitimate	Illegitimate	Legitimate	Illegitimate
Under 1 year of age	0	0	2	0
Under 4 weeks of age	0	0	0	0
Under 1 week of age	0	0	0	0

Maternal Mortality

No deaths of mothers in childbirth occurred during the year.

Cancer Deaths

There were 20 deaths due to cancer as compared with 28 in 1966.

	Males	Females	
Stomach	3	1	
Lungs and Bronchus	1	2	
Uterus	—	1	
Others	6	6	
	10	10	TOTAL 20

Infectious Diseases

During the year 40 cases of infectious diseases were notified.

Measles	32
Pneumonia	2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1
Scarlet Fever	1
Whooping Cough	4

Food Poisoning

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year.

Causes of death at different periods of life during 1967.

Cause of death	Sex	Total all ages	Under 4 weeks	4 weeks/under 1 year	Age in years 1—	5—	15—	25—	35—	45—	55—	65—	75 and over
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	M	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
	F	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	M	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
	F	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	2
Diabetes	M	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	M	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	3
	F	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	8
Coronary Disease, Angina	M	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	2	1	7
	F	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	4
Hypertension with Heart Disease	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
	F	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1

Causes of death at different periods of life during 1967—continued.

Cause of death	Sex	Total all ages	Under 4 weeks	4 weeks/under 1 year	Age in years 1—	5—	15—	25—	35—	45—	55—	65—	75 and over
Other Heart Disease	M	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	5
	F	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	9
Other Circulatory Disease	M	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	4
	F	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Pneumonia	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
	F	9	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	3
All other Accidents	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
	F	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Suicide	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
	F	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—
Total all causes	M	51	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	5	17	25
	F	60	2	—	—	—	—	1	1	4	6	10	36

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE

1. Immunisation and Vaccination

Protective Immunisation and Vaccination against Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Tetanus, Smallpox and Poliomyelitis are undertaken by the General Practitioners and at the Infant Welfare and School Clinics.

There are two Infant Welfare Clinics in the Urban District ; one at Northam and one at Appledore. Clinics are held fortnightly.

2. Meals on Wheels

A meals on wheels service is provided for the aged in the Urban District. Seventeen to twenty-four meals, twice weekly are prepared each week at " Fairlea," the County Welfare Home, and are delivered by the Women's Voluntary Service to Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho ! residents.

3. Infectious Diseases

There is an Infectious Disease section at the Kingsley Hospital, Bideford which serves Northam as well as other Local Authorities in North Devon.

4. Smallpox

All Smallpox cases are sent to LISKEARD Smallpox Hospital. Plymouth Ambulance Service will provide transport for smallpox cases. Telephone number : Plymouth 64101.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have much pleasure in submitting my third report on the administration of the enviromental health of the Urban District of Northam for the year 1967.

During the previous year the accent of the work of the department has been on the closure of unfit rooms in the district but this year the control of the caravan sites has been predominant. A detailed report on the existing conditions found on the caravan sites was considered by the Council and a Sub-Committee was appointed to inspect all the sites and prepare a revised set of licence conditions to take effect from March, 1968.

There is at present a general shortage of satisfactory tented camping and touring caravan sites in the district and the Council are at present considering the provision of a model camping site at Westward Ho ! Extra camping facilities would provide a much needed amenity in the area and many more summer visitors would be attracted to the district.

Since the Housing Act, 1964 came into operation tenants of private houses can now require the Council to compel the landlord to improve the standard amenities of their houses. But only three applications have been received and in each case improvements were secured. Conversely the Rent Act 1965 enables landlords to apply to the Rent Officer Service to increase low rents to a fair and economic level. In his report this year the Senior

Rent Officer states that excluding the areas of Plymouth and Exeter it is estimated that the rents of 5,500 unfurnished lettings in the County of Devon would be affected by the Act. During the first full year 281 rents were registered with only 6% (34) of all applications coming from North Devon. Are tenants and landlords satisfied with their lot, does a general state of apathy exist, or is this slow reaction due to a general lack of information? The Council have decided that the most effective way of answering this question is for a house-to-house survey to be started in Appledore. I shall be interviewing owner-occupiers and tenants alike, informing them of the facilities at their disposal if required. At the same time information will be acquired and collated for a general revision of housing policy for the area as a whole.

It has been noticed generally that there appears to be a shortage of good small builders in the area who are prepared to submit competitive estimates for house improvements and for minor repairs. The shortage is particularly noticeable where drainage work is necessary.

Urban development continues in the area at an ever increasing rate and this is particularly noticeable with relation to existing small farmers. In the case of almost every agricultural holding new houses have been built next to long established cowsheds, stables, pigsties, poultry houses and manure heaps etc. and I have been kept very busy with the resulting complaints of nuisance from smells, flies, rats and noise.

The complainants do not realise at first that only reasonable precautions can be enforced by the Council to abate the nuisances when the only satisfactory action to them is the removal of the farm which of course is out of the question. Ideally planning legislation would require a no-mans land of 400 yards between farming activities and domestic houses but unfortunately land is at too high a premium.

The number of open air swimming pools is still increasing. This amenity is becoming a standard requirement for holiday camps and hotels; but what of the winter swimmer? The only indoor public swimming pool is 26 miles away at Ilfracombe which is closed during the winter leaving the Exeter pool the nearest available.

At the end of 1966 a firm operating butchers hawking vans from premises at Westward Ho! were prosecuted by the Council at Bideford Magistrates Court for seven offences of the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960 and one offence of the Food and Drugs Act 1955. The firm was found guilty on all eight charges and fined £25 with 5 guineas costs. An appeal against conviction of the seven offences of the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960 was heard at the Exeter Quarter Sessions in February. All seven appeals were dismissed with costs against the appellant; the total costs amounting to £188.

The routine sampling of food in the district has again been very minimal but it is intended during next year to include milk, clotted cream, liquid egg, and cooked meats in the sampling plan for the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Councillors and members of the staff for the help that has been given me during the year.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

C. J. UTTING.

Summary of Visits

General Sanitation

Water Supply	29
Drainage (new installations — 314)	526
Stables and Piggeries	4
Animal Boarding Establishments	1
Caravan Sites	57
Rent Act	3
Factories	14
Shops Act (Sunday Trading)	11
Outworkers	7
Bakehouses	1
Licensed Premises	3
Refuse Disposal	5
Pest Control — Rats and Mice	132
Shops and Offices	68
Noise	19
Miscellaneous Visits	30
Swimming Baths	8

Housing

Houses inspected under Public Health Act	58
Re-visits paid to the above	37
Visits under Housing Act	40
Re-visits paid to the above	79
Overcrowding, number of houses inspected	2
Filthy or Verminous Premises, number of houses inspected	9
Re-visits paid to the above	9
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	46
Improvement Grants	86

Infectious Diseases

Visits regarding Disinfection	2
Miscellaneous Infectious Disease Visits	5

Meat and Food Inspections

Inspection of Meat

Visits to

Slaughterhouses	3
Shops and Stalls	10
Other Premises	1

Visits to

Hotels	5
Bakers and Confectioners	5
Butchers	8
Canteens	1
Dairies and Milk Distributors	2
Food Preparing Premises	2
Fried Fish Shops	2

Summary of Visits—continued.

Grocers	17
Greengrocers and Fruiterers	6
Ice-cream Premises	8
Restaurants	29
Street Vendors and Hawkers' Carts	22
Institutions	2
Clubs	4
Licensed Premises	4

Visits in Connection with Sampling of :—

Sewage	2
Ice-cream	60
Water	7
Miscellaneous	11
Total of all Visits	**1502**

Improvement Grants

The response to the improvement grant system has been very disappointing this year. Since the scheme was started in 1959 only 179 applications have been made with grants paid in 125 cases. I feel that there are many more cases where houses lack the standard amenities and the owners would consider improvements if they had the necessary information at hand. Advertising in the local press had no effect so it is my intention to visit houses on a street to street basis to inspect the properties and inform the occupiers where necessary of the financial facilities that are available. The Council will also be able to examine their housing policy with the information that is obtained.

Standard Grants

Number of applications	8
Number of applications approved	7
Amount of maximum grants approved	£1,585
Number of grants paid	8
Amount of grants paid	£1,112 8s. 1d.

Discretionary Grants

Number of applications	2
Number of applications approved	1
Amount of maximum grant approved	£400
Number of grants paid	0

Complaints

During the year 211 complaints have been received covering every aspect of public health. Every complaint has been investigated and where necessary appropriate action was taken.

There follows an analysis of all complaints of nusiances etc. received from members of the Public during the year.

Drainage and Sewerage	48	Housing Defects	39
Rat and Mice Infestation	36	Keeping of Animals	26
Water Supply	15	Unsatisfactory Food	11
Noise	9	Caravan Sites	5
Refuse Disposal	4	Insect Pests	4
Dirty Houses	4	Atmospheric Pollution	2
General Sanitation	2	Food Delivery Vans	2
Overcrowding	1	Fish Frying	1
Dirty Hotel Kitchen	1	Shop Closing	1

Water Supply

The water supply in the district is undertaken by the North Devon Water Board and has been satisfactory in bacteriological quality. Throughout the year the Water Board have taken a total of 40 bacteriological samples of drinking water, all of which have been examined by the Public Health Laboratory Service and found to be satisfactory. During the summer the quantity of water was found to be insufficient for periods of short duration. This is considered to be due to the large influx of holiday-makers in the area when the population rises to an estimated 16,000.

Every house and every person living in the district are now considered to be supplied from the public water mains direct to the house. There are no known cases where houses are supplied by means of standpipes.

Swimming Pools

There are eight swimming pools in the area including one school pool which is supervised by the County Council, plus two childrens paddling pools. Visits are made to these pools during the summer months and the pool supervisors are advised on the proper control of the pool with regard to the bacteriological purity, chlorination, filtration and clarity etc. Where necessary the swimming pool water is tested to establish the correct dosage of chlorine. In order to economise on the costs of sampling this year no bacteriological samples were submitted for examination.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

The facilities for disposal of sewage in the area are generally unsatisfactory being either by untreated discharge to the river or sea, or by septic tank treatment and land drainage. The existing main sewers are continually being added to as new housing estates are developed and under certain conditions are subject to surcharge.

The Council's Consulting Engineers are at present carrying out a detailed survey of the sewerage in the area and it is intended to pump all sewage into the sea after receiving partial treatment.

Caravan Sites

There are 13 licenced caravan sites in the district varying in size from 6 to 200 caravans. Residential caravans are permitted on 9 sites. A detailed survey of every site was made and a report was considered by the Council. It was found that there were 871 contraventions of the

existing site licence conditions and that the site owners would find it unreasonably burdensome to bring their sites up to the required standard. The existing conditions have been completely revised and brought up to date with modern facilities and the new conditions will take effect from the beginning of the 1968 season.

Maximum permitted number of licensed caravans	993
Maximum permitted number of holiday caravans	891
Actual number of holiday caravans	710
Maximum permitted number of residential caravans	102
Actual number of residential caravans	68

The Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963

The part of this legislation that is enforced by the Council covers the health, safety and welfare of people who are employed in offices and shops. The Act deals with cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature, ventilation, lighting, sanitation etc.

Accidents

Only one accident has been reported this year. A young female employee in a small restaurant placed an opened tin on top of a refrigerator. When she opened the door to the refrigerator the tin fell and in trying to catch the tin both hands were lacerated. The accident was investigated and it was decided that no action was necessary.

Exemptions

Applications can be made for exemptions from the requirements of the Act concerning space, temperature, sanitary conveniences and washing facilities. No applications have been received.

Analysis of Contraventions

Section	Number of Contraventions found	
4	Cleanliness	1
5	Overcrowding	0
6	Temperature	1
7	Ventilation	0
8	Lighting	1
9	Sanitary Conveniences	5
10	Washing facilities	4
11	Supply of drinking water	0
12	Clothing accommodation	0
13	Sitting facilities	0
14	Seats (Sedentary Workers)	0
15	Eating facilities	0
16	Floor, passage and stairs	1
17	Fencing exposed parts machinery	0
18	Protection of young persons from dangerous machinery	0
19	Training of young persons working at dangerous machinery	0
23	Prohibition of heavy work	0
24	First Aid	7
	Other matters	0
	TOTAL	20

Registrations and General Inspections

Premises	New Registrations	Total Number of Registered Premises	Number of Premises Inspected
Offices	2	6	4
Retail Shops	3	47	17
Wholesale Shops and Warehouses	0	0	0
Catering Establishments and Canteens	2	24	15
Fuel Storage Depots	0	0	0
TOTALS	7	77	36

Persons Employed in Registered Premises

Premises	Employees Male	Employees Female	Employees Total
Offices	1	6	7
Retail Shops	34	66	100
Wholesale Shops and Warehouses	0	0	0
Catering Establishments and Canteens	47	178	225
Fuel Storage Depots	0	0	0
TOTALS	82	250	332

Factories

The Local Authority is responsible for the control with certain exceptions of the welfare of factory workers in the district.

Cases in which defects were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspect.	Referred by H.M. Inspect.	Number of cases in which prosecutions instituted
1. Want of Cleanliness (S.1.)	—	—	—	—	—
2. Overcrowding (S.2.)	—	—	—	—	—
3. Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
4. Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	—	—	—	—	—
5. Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6.)	—	—	—	—	—
6. Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.)					
a. Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
b. Unsuitable or defective	6	1	1	—	—
c. Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
7. Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	6	1	1	—	—

Factories

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupier Prosecuted
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by Local Authority	——	——	——	——
2 Factories not included in 1, which Section 7 is enforced by the local Authority	21	14	4	——
3. Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	——	——	——	——
TOTALS	21	14	4	——

Outwork

	Section 110			Section 111		
Nature of Work	Number of Outworkers in Aug. list (S.110 1c).	Number of cases of default in sending lists	Number of Prosecutions for failure to send list	Number of instances of work in un-wholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing apparel (making etc.)	34	—	—	—	—	—

The following is a list of Food Premises in the District

Bread and Cakes	6
Cafes and Restaurants	26
Dairies	2
Fish and Chips	4
Greengrocers	6
Groceries and General Provisions	30
Ice cream	3
Butchers	8
Licensed Premises	22
Hotels and Holiday Camps	19
Sweets and Confectionery	13
Food Preparation	5
TOTAL	144

The Food Hygiene (Markets, Stalls and Delivery Vehicles) Regulations, 1966

These new regulations came into operation on January 1st and control the handling of all open food in delivery vehicles. For the first time sinks, wash-hand basins and hot water supplies etc. are required to be provided on many types of vehicles. It is not generally known how many such vehicles are operating in the area but inspections have been carried out wherever possible. It would be extremely helpful if the registration of such vehicles were made compulsory in order to obtain an accurate record of vehicles. The traders have been reticent in complying with these regulations and it is feared that strong measures may be necessary in the near future to ensure compliance.

Number of Delivery Vehicles, Hawkers Vehicles etc.	20
Number of stalls	4

Food Sampling

Where complaints have been received the matter has been passed to the County Sampling Officer of the Devon County Council who are the Food and Drugs Authority. I have been informed of the following results :—

Sample	Action
Mould in Swiss Roll	Warning letter.
Five milk samples, false trade description	Prosecution, Fined £15, Costs £13 9s. 0d.
Mould in Cream	Warning letter.
Cigarette end in cheese	Fined £5, Costs £3.
Instant Creamed Potatoes	Waiting for Public Analyst's Report
The keeping quality of pasteurised milk	The Retailer was found to store the milk in his van overnight. It was arranged that milk should be picked up at Dairy on delivery day.

Routine samples have been taken in the area with the following results :—

Pork Sausages	Genuine 72% meat.
Quick-Jel	No Report (Not yet received from Public Analyst).
Oxtail Soup	No Report (Not yet received from Public Analyst).
Eight samples of milk for adulteration	All Genuine
Pork Sausages	For Pesticide Investigation
22 samples of milk for bacteriological examination	21 samples satisfactory. One from a producer retailer gave a positive culture of Brucella abortus this supplier has ceased to supply milk.
Three samples of school drinking water	Satisfactory
Four samples of school swimming-pool water	Satisfactory

I am indebted to the County Public Health Inspector for supplying me with the above information.

Condemned Food

206 lbs. of food was found to be unfit for human consumption and was voluntarily surrendered. The food was so disposed of as to prevent it being used for human consumption.

The Liquid Egg (Pasteurisation) Regulations 1963

These regulations require the pasteurisation of liquid egg to be used in food intended for sale for human consumption, other than egg broken out on the food manufacturers premises. Although there are no egg pasteurisation plants in the district liquid egg is used by the bakeries and large hotels etc. No sample of the liquid egg were submitted for the Alpha-Amylase test this year but a scheme is planned for next year.

The Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960

These regulations require a minimum standard of hygiene in all food businesses. This standard embraces preparation surfaces, utensils, washing facilities, food handling etc.

No. of Premises requiring wash-hand basins etc.	144
No. of Premises provided with wash-hand basins etc.	144
No. of Premises requiring sinks, etc.	116
No. of Premises provided with sinks etc.	116

Poultry Inspection

There is only one poultry processing premises in the district of which 5 visits were made during the year. A total of approximately 6,800 birds were processed consisting of 5,000 turkeys, 800 hens and 1,000 capons. Approximately 3% of the hens and 1% of the capons were rejected as unfit for human consumption totalling 200 lbs. in weight.

This establishment is considered to be processing birds under satisfactory conditions with the minimum of cruelty. As the slaughtering is carried out over three days during each week I do not have sufficient time available to inspect the carcases and offal, and great reliance is placed in the processor to voluntarily withdraw birds that are unfit for human consumption.